

Morgan Farmhouse  
On Watson Ford Road, east of Radnor PRR Station  
Radnor Township  
Delaware County  
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-1004

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Eastern Office, Division of Design and Construction  
120 South Third Street  
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

HABS No. PA-1004

MORGAN FARMHOUSE

Street Address: Matson Ford Road, east of Radnor Pennsylvania  
Railroad Station, Radnor Township, Delaware County,  
Pennsylvania

Present Owner: Lowry Chew Stevenson, "Glenvale," Villanova,  
Pennsylvania

Present Occupant: None

Present Use: Abandoned

Brief Statement  
of Significance: This eighteenth century fieldstone farmhouse  
is in almost its original condition.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: Prior to 1788, Ezekiel Rambo; 1788-1800, Hugh DeHaven; 1800-1804, Peter DeHaven; 1804-1806, Patience Morgan; 1806-1859, Captain William Morgan, and his heirs until 1864; 1864 to date Joseph Johnson Brown and his heirs, the present owner being the present representative of the family. (Chester County Deed Book D-2, p. 232; Delaware County Deed Book E, p. 580; Delaware Co. Deed Book G, p. 96; Delaware County Deed Book H, p. 536; Delaware County Deed Book M-2, p. 668; Delaware County Deed Book N-2, p. 172.)
2. Date of erection: No actual evidence except the structure itself - perhaps 1760-1770.
3. Architect, builder, suppliers etc.: Nothing known
4. Original plans, construction etc.: Nothing known
5. Notes on alterations and additions: No information
6. Important old views and references: None known

B. Historical Events Connected with the Structure:

Ezekiel Rambo, original owner, was member of a Swedish family settled on the banks of the Schuylkill in nearby Upper Merion Township.

Hugh DeHaven (b. 1750) married in 1775, Sarah Holstein of Upper Merion (sister-in-law of Rev. Slator Clay, rector

of Old St. David's Church, Radnor) and served as Vestryman 1789-93 and Warden 1794-97 of Old St. David's Church while living in this house. His son, Peter DeHaven, the next owner, was born in 1776 and married, in 1801, Sarah Atlee, daughter of Colonel Samuel Atlee, who came as a bride to this house. (References to above: Anna M. Holstein, Swedish Holsteins in America From 1644 to 1892, Norristown, Pa.: 1892, pp. 31, 85, 105; Henry Pleasants, The History of Old St. David's Church, Philadelphia: 1915, p. 318)

The subsequent owner, Captain William Morgan, was Captain of First Company of First Brigade, Third Division, Pennsylvania Militia, in camp at Marcus Hook in 1814 during the War of 1812 (Henry Graham Ashmead, History of Delaware County, Pa., Philadelphia: 1884, p. 90) and a school director of Radnor Township, 1840 and 1843 (ibid., p. 686).

The late Sheriff Nathan P. Pechin often told the story of Captain "Billy" Morgan taking a prize Arabian horse up the stairs to a second-story bedroom to show her for the last time to his aged dying mother.

In recent years the property has served as a tenant dairy farm on the Vanor estate of the Brown and Chew families.

C. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated: None

Prepared by F. J. Dallett

Date June 9, 1958

For Radnor Historical Society

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This is a typical eighteenth-century fieldstone farmhouse, which has very few alterations.
2. Condition of fabric: Basically sound and a farm residence until a year ago, but now abandoned, doors open, windows broken, etc. Outbuildings in ruinous condition.

### B. Technical Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: Not recorded
2. Foundations: Stone
3. Wall construction: Nearly all stone, plastered over. Frame covered porch on west wall of kitchen; one-story stone pantry projecting from north wall of kitchen, from which is hung a frame-enclosed back porch.

4. Porches: There is a wooden one-story porch on the south front, which does not run across the entire facade. There is also a frame covered porch on the west wall of the kitchen (per photographs).
5. Chimneys: Two. One at east end of stone, one at west end of brick, both covered with decaying plaster.
6. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: Original five horizontal panelled front door in east section; rear door in east section, although half glass (nine lights above) and two vertical panels below, has old muntins and hardware and appears to be a very early door of this type; kitchen door on south front is old, of four vertical panels; all other doors are replacements.
  - b. Windows and shutters: Original window framings and many original window lights throughout. No shutters remaining.
7. Roof:
  - a. Shape, covering: Gable roof, covered in old decaying slate. Rafters are exposed on interior.
  - b. Cornice, eaves: Plain wooden cornice.
  - c. Dormers: Two original dormers on south (front) facade of east (older) section.

C. Technical Description of Interiors:

1. Floor plans:

First Floor: Center stairhall and two main rooms in east (older) section; one large kitchen in west section with small pantry on its north wall, and enclosed porch on its west side.

Second Floor: Two bedrooms and bath in east (older) section; one large bedroom in west section.

Third Floor: Two small bedrooms in west section; attic space in east section. (West section has attic space on what is fourth floor.)

Probably under the tenure of Captain William Morgan, in the early 1800's the west section was added. Captain Morgan probably had the barn built, and it was very possibly erected by the local carpenter, Samuel Morgan (a relative), who in 1804 built a very similar one for James Hunter, Jr., at Woodstock (see report on Woodstock).

2. Stairways: One center stairway in east section, first to second floor, which has a square railing (hence, replacement??), square balustrades, which are probably replacements and a heavy columnar newel post, which may be old. Another enclosed stairway, second to third floors, original.
3. Flooring: Random-width original flooring throughout second floor and in kitchen, first floor (though covered by linoleum).
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Plastered, papered and/or painted. On door walls leading to front parlor and front bedroom, east side, both walls are sheathed beaded with original boards (stained a dark brown). Chair rail in two east rooms, first floor.
5. Doorways and doors: Mostly four vertical panelled doors, probably original; some five horizontally panelled doors, probably replacements.
6. Trim: Heavy boxing over windows in east section.
7. Hardware: Many original H & L hinges, old latches and locks throughout, but a few modern replacements, notably in kitchen and bathroom.
8. Lighting: Electricity (disconnected)
9. Heating: Four original mantels over original fireplaces in four rooms, east side (all open except northeast first-floor room, which is filled in); kitchen fireplace in west side is entirely bricked and plastered over, mantel gone (though panels above fireplace remain); no visible fireplace on second floor west side. Radiators. Coal stove in kitchen in front of old fireplace.

D. Site:

1. General setting and orientation: Below road level in protected valley. Gulph Creek, which flows into the Schuylkill River, goes through the property. The front of the building faces south.
2. Enclosures: Overgrown hedges; fragments of stone wall near east end of house; wire fence along road is very overgrown and hardly visible.
3. Outbuildings: The south (front) wall extends on the east side about ten feet as a free-standing wall and then forms the front wall, about ten feet from house, of a long, one-story stone smoke or cold-storage house, partially below ground, running south to north. Original

stone and frame barn remains, in bad condition; several decayed wood sheds, cornercribs, garage, etc.

4. Walks, driveways etc.: Any walks are overgrown and impassable.
5. Landscaping, gardens etc.: Large old shade trees, but the lawns are heavily overgrown and the site abandoned and slated for commercial development.

Prepared by F. J. Dalled Date June 1958  
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